



**ST NINIAN'S UNITING CHURCH
PRAYERS AND REFLECTION
June 17th, 2026**

**JESUS CHOOSES
THE TWELVE DISCIPLES**



Based on Luke 6:12-19

Jesus Chooses the Twelve Apostles

¹² Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer to God. ¹³ And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles: ¹⁴ Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, ¹⁵ and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who was called the Zealot, ¹⁶ and Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Jesus Teaches and Heals

¹⁷ He came down with them and stood on a level place with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸ They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases, and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹ And everyone in the crowd was trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty patient and loving God, as Jesus prayed all night before the twelve, grant me the patience to understand your will for me. Inspire my heart with discernment, give me the courage to follow your call, and the humility to serve you in your community. May I come into your presence, like the gathered crowds seeking your healing for what ails me, touched by your love and grace accepting your power to heal and bless. Bless the leadership of St Ninian's, the worship, and the faith community with a heart of unity, renewal and revival for your church through Jesus' holy name I pray amen.

PRAYER POINTS OF THANKS

- Thank you, setting apart and gifting the twelve, showing that you guide and call ordinary people into extraordinary work.
- Thank you, for Jesus' compassion as it is an inspiration for us to know that he cared for and loved every one.
- Thank you for the life and grace of Christ who brings wholeness and mercy to all people without exception. He can do what I cannot and I live and die in his mercy and grace.

PRAYER POINTS OF PRAISE

- praise the Holy Spirit's guiding presence in pray that leads to wise decisions.
- praise for Jesus' authority to heal, teach, and restore, touching the sick and the marginalised.
- praise God for unity, abundant grace, and hope in our community and beyond.

PRAYER POINTS FOR CONFESSION

- I confess that I am dependent on God's discernment rather than my own ambitions.
- I confess my fear of stepping out into the unknown with strangers rather than trusting in the One who has called me into that space.
- Forgive my neglect of prayer and compassion, asking for an easier way of life that doesn't ask too much of me.

WORDS OF GRACE

Lord, I have placed the worst of my thoughts and actions into your hands of love, mercy and grace. You have promised to cleanse me when I confess my sins. I do now so confess and rest peacefully in the cleansing palm of your hand. Thanks be to God amen.

REFLECTION

I remember a long time ago a former moderator had to make a big decision on accepting a call into a different kind of ministry. He took himself off into the bush and prayed hard. After his prayer time had ended three white sulfured cockatoos came and quietly sat with him. He took this a sign and answer to his prayer.

Luke presents us with a moment that has both an ancient and yet familiar feeling. Jesus praying through the night, seeking direction, and then stepping into intentional, purposeful choices. In a world that prizes urgency and surface-level certainty, Luke is offering us an invitation to experience the quiet discipline that lays firmly within our mission. Jesus doesn't rush decisions when the stakes are high – he takes time to prayerfully contemplate before saying what he's going to do. His example reorients our own hurried approach to calling and community.

Luke shows us the value to be found in solitary conversation with God as the foundation of leadership. Jesus doesn't gather a committee or publish a poll; no, he prays, and from that intimate space comes a divinely guided selection –

the twelve apostles who will accompany him, learn from him, and later will become witnesses to the Word (gospel) with authority. The emphasis isn't on their human faults but on God's compassion and ability to work through them despite their faults. This is a liberating reminder: calling is God's work, not just our best efforts.

When Jesus names the twelve, he's framing leadership as a shared, fragile project among us who carry both our gifts and our limitations. Peter's brash energy sits beside Judas's betrayal potential, and yet Jesus puts his trust in all of them with a mission that expands beyond their lifetime. The inclusion of Simon, James, John, and the others signals a community built on a common purpose directed through the authority of God. When we look at leadership from this perspective, we see leadership inclusive of service, humility, and continual dependence on God's guidance.

Through the reading we see the revelation of Jesus's authority entering into our everyday ordinary and extraordinary lives; crowds looking for healing, a day when the power of Christ is present to heal. Luke moves us from the quiet mountain to the noisy crowd where mercy is given. Healing isn't a spectacle it's an invitation – an encounter that reframes who is included, who is tested, and who is restored.

In our own time we're called to pray deeply, choose faithfully, and move courageously toward those in need. Our churches, communities, and workplaces need the same blend of discernment, humility, and healing presence that Jesus models for us. May I also encourage you to intentionally find the quiet spaces, listen for God's direction, and step into the world with a gospel that heals, includes, and empowers.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Lord Jesus in the quiet of Your night of prayer, I lift up those whom You chose to carry Your name into the world. Grant Your church discernment as we all seek the voices of the Spirit in our various Teams and Councils as we all want to see Your church grow and experience renewal in Spirit, deed, members and grant courage to those in leadership. Touch and use Your healing power on those who are sick, those who are grieving, those who are broken-hearted, and those who are oppressed. Draw near to families who are struggling due to the cost-of-living issues as well as those families who are living with relational difficulties and fatigue. May Your power flow from Your touch through our hands to the hurting person we meet along the way. In Your name I pray amen.

A POEM

PRAYING BEGINNING IN THE QUIET SPACES; ENDING IN THE CROWD

In the hush between the stars and the breaking day, He pockets the noise of the crowd, gathers silence as a cloak. One night pressed to heaven's window, He prays— the Father's map unfolding in the drumbeat of His heart.

From among the steady hum of seekers and the wary steps of fishermen, He calls the names carved in the dust of geography and hope: Simon, Andrew, James, John, Matthew, and the rest marked not by title first, but by listening first, following last.

The winds of choice sweep through the shore, and the weak become strong in His quiet insistence: blessed are the poor, the hungry, the weeping, the merciful, the faithful in mercy, the pure in heart.

Then the throng presses closer, healing like dawn— unseen hands turning sorrow to morning light, as the whole village gathers where grace touches skin, and fear loosens its grip, even if only for a moment.

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